



## Westlands Water District

3130 N. Fresno Street, P.O. Box 6056, Fresno, California 93703-6056, (209) 224-1523, FAX: (209) 241-6277

October 21, 1998

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Dear Friends,

Westlands Board of Directors recently adopted a position statement on the CALFED Bay-Delta Program. A copy of the statement is attached.

As you know, Westlands management and Board have been actively engaged in the CALFED process, hoping to see a balanced and equitable program to address the diverse problems in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta/San Francisco Bay. We have long held the belief that Bay/Delta environmental problems must be addressed so that agriculture's water supply to the Valley can improve. Ecosystem and water quality improvements and water supply reliability must be addressed and implemented in a balanced and fair manner.

Unfortunately, we have not seen the same level of commitment from the CALFED agencies. Our position statement conveys our concerns with the direction the program is headed and offers key components to be included in CALFED's plan to solve the problems and address the long-term needs of all stakeholders in the state. Simply, CALFED needs to recognize the importance of additional storage and conveyance facilities as part of the ultimate Delta solution. Increased water storage and restoration of south-of-Delta water users' reduced water supplies are taking a backseat to what's currently proposed in CALFED's draft implementation plan and proposed preferred alternative, which is expected to be officially released by the end of the year. In fact, one CALFED proposal is to further reduce our water supply reliability as part of the Stage 1 implementation plan. That's clearly not acceptable -- especially given the amount of water and money our farmers have already given up for environmental restoration.

Those of you who have been following the CALFED Program know how fragile relations have become in recent months. Obviously, this is a concern. We, however, remain committed to working toward a Delta fix that's fair and balanced for all stakeholders. It is vitally important to our farmers, farm workers and farm communities, who depend on a reliable water supply, that we reach a successful conclusion so they may continue to produce food and fiber products, jobs and economic activity.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, or if you are interested in learning more about the CALFED Program and Bay-Delta issues.

Sincerely,

David L. Orth  
General Manager